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Issue #13, published for the 97th FAPA mailing by Robert & Juanita Coulson, Route 3, Wabash, Indiana, USA. Not published for anybody else, though out of the goodness of our hearts we do distribute an extra copy here and there. (Free, too; I tell you, sometimes I am overwhelmed by my own generosity.....)

I could give you all sorts of excuses as to why this is being postmailed, but I think I'll just say what else do you expect of a 13th issue and let it go at that.

BENCH OF CONTENTS (it isn't big enough to be a table...)

- Page 1 - This stuff right here, by RSC
- Page 2 - LONESOME TRAVELER, a column by RSC
- Page 4 - ACRES OF CLAMS, mailing comments by RSC
- Page 10 - EGGS AND MARROWBONE, mailing comments by JWC
- Page 18 - FRONTAL LOBE PATTING, article by JWC
- Page 14 - NOTES ON SINGING, by JWC

(We heard from Tucker this time; he said he wasn't including anything.)

2

## LONESOME TRAVELER

The other day we got a package of price-lists from our discount folk record specialist. (Some nice prices, for us in the sticks, like Prestige 12" lp's for \$3.) Anyway, along with all this literature was a little folder titled "Should Pete Seeger Go To Jail?" My immediate reaction to this sort of question is "why should I care?" but I read the item all the way through, down to the point where it said that it was being circulated by Friends of Pete Seeger. This inspired me to the ditty below. It should be sung -- well, probably it shouldn't be sung, but if it is sung, the tune is "We Are Sons Of Old Aunt Dinah" from the Disney movie, "The Great Locomotive Chase". Have fun finding it, Felz.

### WE ARE FRIENDS OF OLD PETE SEEGER

We are friends of old Pete Seeger,  
Who has talent (rather meager),  
And who isn't awfully eager  
To spend a year in jail.

They tell us he's subversive;  
We think he's just discursive,  
And we'd like to hear his verse if  
He can stay out on bail.

Cited by a House Committee  
And it really is a pity.  
(There's a concert in the city,  
Raising funds for our Ideal.)

There were others also cited.  
While we wish their wrongs were righted  
Their hopes must all be blighted,  
For they don't have Pete's appeal.

FAPA's liberals have my permission to be horrified because I have made fun of a Heroic Figure in Our Fight For Personal Freedom. Technical data; this verse is a second draft, since I wrote the original down while I was thinking of it.

I ADMIT MY ERROR in the comments on fannish intelligence. The average fan is more intelligent than the average non-fan (at least if the intelligence is measured by an IQ test...let's not get into that again, Donaho). The fannish IQ may even be the 125 or so that Elinor claimed for it. Where I went wrong was in confusing intellect with emotion. That is, it seemed impossible to me that an individual with an IQ of 125 or so (or of 62½, for that matter) could do some of the damnfool stunts that fans pull. (The bitter feuds, the recent thefts, the not-so-recent suicide, some of the God-awful marriage and sexual situations of some fans -- which I certainly will not document because I'm not even sure I believe them myself.) Of course, none of these situations actually have any relation to intelligence; they are emotional reactions, and a genius can be just as emotionally immature as Mr. National Average IQ -- in fact, I guess he's more apt to be. So I will try to be more careful in the future, as far as terms go. Fans are not unintelligent; they're

just emotionally crippled.

You know, I should apologize more often. It's fun.

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"Why doesn't somebody cross electric blankets with toasters so that people will pop out of bed?" ....swiped from VARI-COLOR NEWS and published because I thought Dan McPhail might get a charge out of it.  
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CALL FOR FRANK MERRIWELL! I suppose you've all read juvenile sports fiction and are well acquainted with the fact that the poor (but noble) little team, filled with boys who play for naught but the glory of old Pratfall U. (or Sky High, as the case may be), always has a Big Game in which it is opposed by a menage of mercenary monsters. In fiction, of course, the theory that Right is Might prevails, and nobility wins. I used to wonder if anything like this ever happened in real life (I was made prematurely cynical as a child by being a Chicago White Sox fan).

The FORT WAYNE JOURNAL-GAZETTE for Oct. 31 devoted a column to the football team of Rose Polytechnic Institute. Rose Poly (as she is familiarly called) is a little engineering school in Terre Haute, Indiana, distinguished mainly by the fact that every one of its engineering graduates in the past few years has been hired without trouble -- a point which few if any engineering schools of any size can equal. It also appears to be the last bastion of the amateur in college football. Rose Poly does no recruiting for ball players, gives no athletic scholarships demands that athletes must keep up their scholastic average and practice on their own time. In an interview, coach Max Kidd stated that he had a squad of 20 men, 15 of whom were able-bodied. He also said that he had to shift from the Wing T formation to the Single Wing in midseason because he lost his last quarterback thru injuries. If this situation isn't a typical juvenile-fiction one it's as close as you're apt to get. The Saturday before the interview, Rose Poly had its Big Game with Earlham College.

Earlham won, 80 to 0. Previous efforts of the Rose Poly team this season have ended in defeats of 70-0, 58-0, 61-0, 52-6, 48-0 (this one broke a 34-game losing streak for the other team). It's a pretty good example of what happens to people in our society who believe in Playing The Game and other such cliches. They go out once a week and Play The Game and the opposition slaughters them. (Of course, I'm happy to find at least one college that believes that education is more important than football, but I do wonder why they play football at all....)

THEY WANT TO INCREASE MY READING SPEED. Book-Of-The-Month Club sent around an ad for a Reading-Improvement course. I didn't sign up, but I did read their little circular and I was slightly shocked. "The reading speed of the average adult American today is no better than that of the average eighth grader -- less than 200 words per minute on moderately difficult material." 200!?! The last time I was officially tested was in the 8th grade and I was doing 550 wpm on their test with 100% comprehension....and I've encountered enough fast readers to know that I'm not one. (This is one thing that changed my mind on fannish intelligence; reading ability is not only a factor in IQ tests, it's a necessity in modern society, and if 200 wpm is the national average then I don't know any fans who can't read 3 times as fast as the average, or more.) The booklet also had a list of officer-candidate groups at Maxwell Air Base who took a speed-reading course and their improvement thereby: from 239 wpm to 363 wpm, from 248 to 368, from 232 to 432, from 253 to 443. Nice improvement, but look at those figures!!!

## ACRES OF CLAMS

SERCON'S BANE (F. Busby) Before you demand something to replace HUAC you have to prove that it in itself is better than nothing; there seems to be some doubt about this. I would like to know what Rosenberg, Fuchs and Blake have to do with HUAC? Was HUAC responsible for uncovering them? Has it ever been responsible for locating any spy? (And if it was, why was it -- congressional committees are supposed to gather evidence which is needed for impending legislation, not to catch spies.) I was under the impression that the FBI was doing a middling-good job of spy-catching. HUAC isn't even doing a middling-good job of collecting evidence for legislation.

So we're raising children who are totally unfitted for love. Don't you think I'm worth saving? I do.... Seriously, all this talk about saving "worthless" types ignores the fact that pro-survival characteristics change. One hundred years ago a survival type in this country was a brawny illiterate who could kill Indians (or his neighbors) without a qualm, beat a horse or his wife as the occasion demanded, and have a positive enjoyment of solitude. Such characteristics not only aren't needed any more, they're now anti-survival -- but the detractors of modern medicine continue to imply that brute survival is the only desired trait.

THE VINEGAR WORM (Leman) As long as I'm jumping on HUAC, let's have a little story. All names, of course, are fictitious and bear no resemblance to any living character. Now then: Once Upon A Time a decent, law-abiding citizen named Bob Leman was walking down the main street of his village. It was Saturday night and he was accosted by a citizen who had imbibed too freely. The citizen was belligerent. Mr. Leman attempted to avoid trouble, but the belligerent one took a poke at him, whereupon Leman knocked him down. At this point a policeman charged in and arrested both parties. At the hearing, the policeman (who was the brother-in-law of the drunk and afraid that he'd have to support his sister's family if the drunk got a jail term) testified that Mr. Leman had, without provocation, attacked the other man, and knocked him down, and that after this the other man had taken a swing at him. Mr. Leman had to confess that the policeman had not testified to anything which had not actually happened, and cheerfully paid his \$50 fine for assault.

And I hope that shuts up the nonsense about "Operation Abolition" containing "nothing that did not happen". If you want to argue the merits of the film, go ahead, but don't harp on points which can be proved ridiculous by someone who hasn't even seen the picture. On your other points, I'm quite willing to wait until I've seen the thing to pronounce judgment, but this little lapse of logic sticks out like a sore thumb.

"Horror Unparalleled" was the best single item in the mailing.

I thought your comparison of fandom to a narcotic was quite valid, but as long as the addiction produces no "social burdens" I question the "dangerously neurotic" part -- neurotic, yes, but fans seem to be about as harmless as they come. If they need a crutch, that's tough, but I see no need for "rigorous control" as long as they enjoy themselves and don't harm anyone. The only practical definition of insanity that I know of is refusal to accept the realities of life; by that criterion, fans are "nutty as a peanut cluster" and what of it? Cogswell's letter was typically Cogswell, but I'm not convinced that the average fan isn't his peer, and fanzine fanzine fans aren't that much superior to con fans.

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Or, in other words, Cogswell is as nutty as a peanut cluster, too.  
I can give you one reason why we shouldn't have supported Batista;  
he lost.

You say HUAC is serving a useful function in gathering information about pending legislation. Refute the statement in "The Un-Americans" that it has held legislative hearings on only 6 bills in its entire history, and that only 1/6 of our anti-subversive bills are even referred to it. Do we need this expensive an organization to decide the fate of 6 bills -- somewhat less than one a year? (Now, mind you, I don't think Donner told the whole truth in "The Un-Americans" -- but I don't think you're telling it either and where the two of you differ I'd like an explanation.)

REVOLTIN' REMARKS (Alger) Loved that card -- one of Devore's, I presume? Second-best thing in the mailing.

THE VENUS ORGANIZATION (Rotsler) Took your advertising to work; got no offers of business for you, but several requests as to how one went about joining your organization. (I told them the first requirement seemed to be a beard.)

EYETRACKS (Coslet) People aren't grown up until they spend more time worrying about their job than they do on their hobby. So by normal standards, most fans aren't grown up yet. (Aint it fun, though?) Sudden thought -- Say, T. Carr, how about doing "Peter Fan" as one of your fabulous fannish fiction pieces?

Agree with you on pornography.

ANKUS (Pelz) I wish you wouldn't thank us so publicly -- you'll get us in bad with the majority of waitnglisters that we don't send VANDY to.

LARK (Danner) Where...WHERE, I say.... would this great nation be if everyone had your attitude towards appeasing authority? Part of the British Empire, that's where. RESIST this contumacious tyranny....fight them in the mails, in the courts....Man the Barricades!

LIMBO (Donaho) Agree with you on only children. I never did like people my own age very well; none of them ever seemed to share my interests. (Now I'm supposed to be interested in buying a home, getting a good community playground for the community children, etc. Thank God we live in the country; we don't shock nearly as many young married couples out here.)

On the other hand, I gave up in the middle of "Dracula" because I was bored stiff. Dunno what age I was -- 13 or 14 I suppose -- but for anyone who had gone thru Dorothy Sayers' two detective-horror collections ("The Omnibus of Crime" and "World's Great Crime Stories") "Dracula" was pretty stale cheese. So was WEIRD TALES, several years later.

I agree with you fully on IQ tests -- but I'm not going to turn something down that gives me fuel for an argument, even if I don't think it's the greatest thing in the world. (Besides, without it, we're just yelling "it is - it isn't" without anything in the world to back us up.)

You say Rike can't compare with Castillo or Hall in invective. Now, I have to judge from what I have seen in print (and I haven't seen all the fanzines of the past five years by a long shot) and from that I'd put Rike right up with Gem Carr (and I lost most of my liking for her after the Busby incident) with both Castillo and Hall way down the line.

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Admittedly, I've said worse things about Rike than I did about G. Carr; I don't need to attack Gem. Everybody seems to agree about her; one more voice added to the chorus wouldn't make much difference. Rike can do the same thing and nobody says a word. If the rest of you are afraid to hurt his tender little feelings, I'm not. As for Hall, I came in somewhere in the middle of his fuss with Raeburn, so I don't know about the origins of that. The things I have seen by him -- and some of them were items that people objected to violently -- were all examples of his admittedly crude humor, not intended to be taken seriously, and obvious to anyone not already prejudiced against him. (If you don't believe it, consider the fact that I did laugh at them, and I'm still on good terms with him; do you know of anyone who laughed at Gem Carr's statements who is still on good terms with her?) Quite possibly Claudius is quite as nasty as people say he is, but until I see this nastiness in action (not likely, now that he's practically out of fandom) I'll keep my opinion.

I don't recall ever getting worked up enough about Castillo to say that I didn't want to know him. Of course, I don't particularly want to know him, but that's because the stuff that you've published by him gives the impression that he talks all the time, on subjects I'm not the slightest bit interested in. I wouldn't go out of my way, either to meet him or to avoid him. I think I would go out of my way to avoid either Rike or Graham. (Or Danny Curran, for that matter; I have met him a couple of times, which was quite enough.)

CELEPHAIS (Evans) Say; another Carl Claudy fan! I suppose his stories were the first science fiction I ever read, back at age 10 or so. (I don't count them when someone asks "When did you start reading science fiction?" because in the first place I didn't know at the time that they were stf -- or that stf existed -- and there was a gap of several years between the time I quit reading Claudy and the time I began reading Heinlein....from Heinlein I branched out into other stf writers.) Were any of Claudy's short stories ever published in book form? (Aside from the 3 in the Winston "Year After Tomorrow" anthology.) Mainly, I'm interested in getting hold of "Doom Tocsin". It ran as a two-part serial in AMERICAN BOY and for some reason I never got the issue containing the last half of it -- for 20 years or so I've wondered how it came out. (The first part ended with Ted Dolliver and Alan Kane flying into a giant cavern under the North Pole, with the tocsin thundering and all.)

I think you have the perfect term for the legal profession; soliciting. I shall cherish it.

I think I've read Bedwell's "Boomer" (I know I've read a book by that title, so unless there are two of them I've read it) and enjoyed it, but I'm really not much interested in railroading.

APOCRYPHA (Janke) Best mailing comments of the year.

I don't think you should have blamed the girl for saying she would not marry an older man; maybe the only older men she knew were your type. (I mean, you gotta admit that this would be a souring experience.)

THE NEHWON REVIEW (Boggs) From what I've seen, the present minds in FAPA seem at least as "great" as the institution. Let's hope you succeed in getting more "creativity" into FAPA; if you do, then I can quit. (Why anyone should want to write creatively for an audience of 65 when he can get twice the circulation -- and to people just as perceptive -- with a genzine, is beyond me, but if you want to do it, you should be able to.)

STEFANTASY (Danner) I certainly pay for breathing. Generally to private, rather than public, concerns, of course, but asthma remedies cost money, and if buying them isn't paying for breathing I don't know what is.

MOONSHINE (Sneary) Well, you never can tell how serious these old FAPAns are about their projects; I seem to have played safe and said nothing at all.

Personal hell? I hadn't thought much about it. Some place where I was continually afflicted by hives, for one...after intensive close-range study I have decided that hives (or possibly eczema) is the most maddening of the allergies. Asthma is harder on one, physically, but I don't suppose this would matter in hell. At any rate, hell would be a place of pure physical torture; I can't see myself bothered by the more refined mental "tortures"....loneliness, claustrophobia or whatever.

DRIFTWOOD (Kidd) I drink red wine cold, when I drink it at all. I know it spoils the flavor, but I don't like the flavor. Never having had much regard for the "proper" way to enjoy things, I take my drinks the way I like them, which leads to things like rye on the rocks and wine mixed with ginger ale. (Red wine, that is; I don't know what I'd mix white wine with. Coca Cola, possibly.)

Thanks for the information on "House of Mystery". Name doesn't ring any bells, but I didn't expect it to. That could be it.

CATCH TRAP, DAY\*STAR (Bradley) Reminds me; next letter I send I'll address to Marion Zimmerman Bradley....maybe I'll get an answer. What I said was that long hair indicates to me a lack of intelligence. I'm afraid I'm not going to change my opinion just because you don't agree with it. As for why I hold this opinion (which wasn't the question you asked, but I'm feeling generous tonight), it goes back to the fact that a vast majority of the long-haired women that I've known have been old-fashioned and/or lacking in intelligence. Sure, some of them are quite hep. Some pro football players can probably discuss Shakespeare and Milton, too, but that doesn't change the general opinion of the class. Your hair length won't affect my opinion of your intelligence -- but if I didn't know you it would. You aren't required to like my opinions, but if you keep going around making blanket statements like "men prefer women to have long hair" you're going to get them, whether you like them or not.

Juanita a high soprano? Hoo, boy! I think Juanita also asked this, but it does seem a bit odd that straining for high notes is "meeting a challenge" while straining for low ones is "forcing one's voice". Are you sure you haven't just arbitrarily decided that high notes are Good, and are trying to justify your choice? (Personally I think that sopranos are a blot on the landscape, but I'm not going to try to argue the point; that's just the way I happen to feel, take it or leave it.)

Despite the fact that I don't like children, I rather agree with your comments to Helen Wesson. Of course they're unfair, as when you sneer that you wouldn't want a woman who couldn't earn as much "outside" money as you do looking after your children -- the ability to make money and the ability to look after children are not even vaguely related (would you hire Lana Turner as a baby-sitter? - she can make several times as much money as you can in an outside job). However, if the tone was a bit harsh and some of the specific examples a bit odd; I agree with the basic idea that children are the responsibility of parents, and

it isn't good for either side if that responsibility is shirked too often. (Of course, women who insist on including their children in all their plans raise Momma's Boys, too...you gotta have moderation.)

Tell Steve that I'm going to continue to think of him as Steve; in this Sears-Roebuckian area the name "David Bradley" conjures up images of manure spreaders and wire fence.

PHANTASY PRESS (McPhail) Enjoyed the article on the Indian dance, tho the first-royal-person style bothered me a bit (I mean all those "we's" floating in the article.) You have a good point in your remarks on the "North America" and "overseas" memberships....just suppose that one of these days Senor Hector Pessina applies for membership....by my reckoning, Argentina is neither North American nor overseas (unless you want to give the Panama Canal one helluva promotion....)

(Yes, Boggs, I'm quibbling; you want to make something of it?)

"Cold as kraut" is a new one on me; is it local or have I just been avoiding it?

CHURN (Rapps) Now was that nice, trying to get Warner to read "The Natural Superiority of Women"? I got a chuckle out of your comments to Morse, mostly because of the contrast with my comments in VANDY. We said the same thing, actually, but oh, the difference in the way we said it! I think that most laws actually say "concealed" weapon, but they are consistently interpreted to mean "concealable", which makes quite a difference. Anyway, don't go trying to carry a six-gun around in a hip holster unless you have a permit or are on your own property or an official target range -- don't even try it on your own property in New York. (New York is another blot on the landscape.)

Okay, herewith an efficiently arranged typewriter keyboard (just the letters, not the numbers and extra keys):

Q W Y R F M I B J  
G P D E T H A O L  
Z X V U N C S K

I could probably do better with a table of letter frequencies in English -- the essence of a good keyboard is to have the most frequent letters handled by the strongest fingers, and the weakest point of the standard keyboard is the letter "A". My keyboard figures on standard typing posture; left fingers resting on (they say "above" but I always rest on the keys, which plays hell with electric typewriters) GFDE and the right fingers on AOL; (or whatever key the right little finger sits on...it's a semi-colon on this typewriter, at least).

TARGET: FAPA (Eney) Lovely constitution, but somewhere you should have had the line "in case of dispute, the decision of the officers shall be final".

Anent the reference to "Fike County" in the "Silverlock" deal, I always considered it a reference to the song, "Sweet Betsy From Pike", but I wouldn't guarantee it. Would Myers have considered folksongs as worthy of being included with the classics?

DIFFERENT (Moscowitzes) Well, Ted, you asked for it.

A PROFOS DE RIEN (Caughran) A local 5 and 10 was selling ball-points for 5¢ each some time back. Good ones, too...even refillable, if you wanted to pay 29¢ for a refill for a pen that cost 5¢.....They seem to

be up to a dime apiece now.

You weren't thinking in your remarks to Speer. What does betraying one's country have to do with spies? The traditional spy is a citizen of the enemy country and isn't betraying a thing. Actually, the true spy is usually treated kindly by history, at least. Major Andre is the prime example in this country; Arnold may be considered a no-account scoundrel by everyone (except Kenneth Roberts) but Andre, who was a British officer, is usually depicted as being rather noble. "Sorry we have to hang you, old chap; rules of war and all that." "Oh, quite; jolly good show and all. Tell Mother I thought of her."

THE RUNNING, JUMPING AND STANDING STILL MAGAZINE(Ashworth) Well, what do you know; somebody who appreciates my true worth! If I'm ever in England I'll look you up and we can sit and stare at each other for an afternoon or so. When we lived in an apartment in town, we didn't even know the name of the people who lived upstairs; oddly enough, here in the country we know the people on both sides of us (the landlord is on one side and the landlord's nephew is on the other). Before nephew moved in, one place was occupied by a Benny Friarmoot, who was known to apparently everybody in the county as an outstanding example of a henpecked husband....everybody I've ever talked to knew him...horrible fate.

A shotgun is the ideal weapon for anyone other than an expert shot (not necessarily just an "experienced gunman"), especially if one can also get buckshot shells.

If our tape recorder wasn't such a heavy monster I might ship it to you, but considering the weight and condition it wouldn't be worth it.

THE LAREAN (Ellik) Lovely comments, but I just chuckled and didn't think of anything to say in reply.

HORIZONS (Warner) I don't object to calling the Tolkien work "The Ring Trilogy" because of confusion with Wagner, but because Tolkien's books are not a trilogy. They comprise a single novel which has been broken up into three books, none of which contain a complete story.

"The Undermen" is fascinating, if only for the idea that a presumably brilliant doctor would fall in love with and marry a woman of sub-normal intelligence....and then work to improve her lot. Some men might marry such a woman -- some intelligent people have a few screws loose emotionally -- but I can't believe in both the marriage and the striving for increased intelligence. Frankly, the story sounded like you got your ideas of love out of TRUE CONFESSIONS.

I enjoyed the Hagerstown comments; of course, I enjoy history, so that may not mean much.

SHADOW MAILING:(Wells) I've gone into voting on waitinglisters before; this time I'll just say NO GODDAMN VOTES! Get in line and quit pushing. I fully believe your Marcian story. (Hansen) A good deal has been said for reincarnation. I remain unconvinced, but I won't say that it's impossible. From your comments on Biblical history you should read the Vardis Fisher "Testament of Man" series. 8 of the 12 books have been published by Pyramid; fine stuff if you don't mind seeing Jews and early Christians depicted as a pack of superstitious fools. (Metcalf) I have never had trouble over staples in this country or envelopes outside it, though I did have a couple of Canadian fanzines bounced for being sent stapled and not enveloped. Lovely comments, but I'm out of room.

EGGS & MARROWBONE (A typed heading for mailing comments this because this is a Tower stencil and somebody in FAPA to the contrary, I think they cut horribly with a stylus and I'd just as leave do without -- to use a popular hoosier expression.)

FANTASY AMATEUR - Well, we are postmailing or premailing or something to this November deadline - obviously not for any last-minute activity requirements, but because one thing and then another intervened all at the last minute: first no money to buy paper, and then when that was obtained the %\$#& company we deal with shipped by truck rather than rail and fouled things up further, and then we had the paper and no money to buy ink and the whole thing got thoroughly snafued. I feel no horror at missing being included in the mailing or anything, but I'd just as soon get whatever I have to say out now so we can start fresh in Feb....er ...Febuary...oh let it stand.

HORIZONS - All this hometown nostalgia rather bothers me. Perhaps I should do a writeup of the various places I've lived in, but it hardly seems worth the trouble. Small town Indiana, which I had not much encountered before my marriage, seems so much bluh to me - friendly people or no, I prefer indifferent people and more useful places to purchase things - I can't buy in this burg nylon guitar strings, velvet, any records that I want, magazines, and despite the presence of chain markets and drugstores I'm always coming up short on something in the sundries line and having to wait till we're in Anderson, or Indianapolis, or Fort Wayne, or a town to obtain. Small towns, feh.

Still, I like living -- i.e. - making my residence in the country; I just prefer it were the country around a decent-sized city.

LIGHTHOUSE - oddly, the only part I really enjoyed were the Nelsontoons.

THE LAREAN - Despite friend centaur's expression, I would say certain missing anatomical details sort of make the situation academic, but then we must go through the mails. You put out a highly entertaining lil zine, but I find nothing to argue with, so I can't say anything?

THE RUNNING JUMPING ETC (Mashworth) Well, just to show you how anti-social we are, the old fellow living a coupla hundred feet from us in the next house had a stroke this fall, and I found out about it from the mailman inquiring if I'd heard anything on his recovery. He didn't recover, and we found this out when our landlord (who is a landowning whiz or something, lives on the other side of our house and apparently bought the old boy's house at a tax auction or something) suddenly started tearing down things and remodeling the place preparatory to renting it to his nephew....or one of his myriad relatives.

Incidentally, a derisive term in this neck of the woods is 'dumb farmer', but as one who's lived in a rural setup for three years, I'm ready to stand up and argue about the term. Our landlord is one of the nicest of the breed - he fixes things (he's built a garage and painted the house and got storm windows and lotsa things since we've moved in), cares not what we do so long as we pay our rent promptly, and a number of times he's dragged

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our wheezing Ford out of driveway snowdrifts with his tractor, let us use part of his land for a vegetable garden, and once when we were stranded in town after a wreck during a blizzard, he drove in town and chauffeured us back out.....all this and he says not boo about our social life or our strange friends who stay till 3 a.m. or what we believe or feel.....the last remnant of the rugged individualist who minds his own business and is contented to let you do the same. If you're in trouble, they'll help, and they expect the same, but the rest of the time, your home (rented or not) is your castle. Suits us fine.

PHANTASY PRESS More Indian lore and work by Darby, please. I've always been interested in Amerindians, and our newly arrived AMERICAN HERITAGE BOOK OF INDIANS has done nothing but whet my enthusiasm.

CATCHTRAP Brunhilde? I sound like Brunhilde? Yo ho to ho indeed..... horrors. I don't (jumping onto another subject now) find de Beauvoir 'an arch feminist'....she simply seems to be saying the myth may or may not be biological and how about trying out true social equality and see. Did you miss...oh surely you didn't....her comments that women who want children and do not want an abortion but are forced to by men find themselves in the position of propogatin the myth? - Men make the laws forbidding abortion, and it is by and large the men who encourage the women to obtain same to save their precious male skins and when the women do they are downgraded as lawbreakers.....this sort of vicious circle..she also fulminated against. She was not saying women must have abortions, merely that is should be their own choice, not a law-winking pressure from a male.

Of course, the ideal to me is a reversable contraceptive such as Enovid or Norlutin. In one of the recent rash of pbs on the subject, one woman was quoted as saying she gave them up after a few months and returned to a less safe method because - "with the old way there's always a chance I might become pregnant, and I just don't feel right using a method that is 100% effective". Now this frankly croggles me. Does she or doesn't she? This to me is just as razor skating a statement as the RC endorsement of rhythm control and condemnation of other methods. If you want to take chances, take chances - in other words, I would say if you are practising birth control, and to me the intent is more important than method regarding rhythm control, get the best method available if you're really sincere. Difference of opinion, undoubtedly, but on this one, I'm afraid I'm really out in the intellectual cold from that babe.

DAY\*STAR Hmm...I suspect one MZB rather than Kerry stencilled the cover. There is quite a difference between the crisp lines on her earlier stuff and the rather wavery unsurety of this one.

But but, how did the movie end? Here I was all wound up for the socko finish and I couldn't find it!

Hmm..that Breen letter certainly gets around doesn't it?

The Freudians in the audience will immediately pounce on your dream sequences, of course. You know the symbolism of endless doors and searching for something lost? My dreams aren't so interesting, but they are rather wacky, and I tend to dream the same thing over again. I rarely have

unpleasant dreams, though some of them are a little nervewracking - they escape being nightmares because I am always aware I am dreaming....I am always a participant and a spectator at the same time. Is this unique or do other people find themselves in the audience and on the stage too? My most startling dream sequences involve flying and swimming, both equally impossible for me, and both, in the dreams, tremendously difficult...and I can remember very few dreams, and then only as a small child, of falling. Now my dreams involve falling, but as I near the ground, my speed slows, I land on my feet and bounce a few times and go right on dreaming - and no you amateur Freudians, this has not started since my marriage. I have also dreamed, unnumbered times since very early childhood, of watching Jiggs and Maggie (and I didn't even read the comic strip!) on a railroad track, operating one of those seesaw handcars....I fictionally follow them to a large garden party rife with flowers and large white Russian wolfhounds; and if anyone out there can supply a Freudian analysis for that one, I'll laugh in your face.

Dreams based on a book one's reading?...rarely, though I've sometimes rehashed a vivid movie in my dreams. My dreams make considerably less plot sense than your psychic one, needless to say.

And tell Steve-David that I enjoyed his filksongs and may even learn a few of them.

DRIFTWOORD I drink red wine cold, or any other kind of wine, including Mogen David which isn't bad cut with A&P's lime rickey cold. I've even been known to ask a waitress for an icecube if ~~it~~ wasn't cold.

Side note to medically interested types like Chris and Marion - isn't there a good sinus (dry-type) remedy that doesn't make one sleepy? I finally broke down and asked the doc for some, and sure enough, just like my bad session with the nasal passages four-five years ago, this new dope made me yawn and mope and generally bluh. Why trade that throbbing sinus for a fuzzy inner canal? And does anyone else with similar trouble have the rather disconcerting side effect impression that one is shrinking? I mean I get this ringing in my ears and I get drowsy and I close my eyes and it's as though I'm falling into one of those hypnotic pinwheels, being drawn into the non-existence center, getting smaller and smaller and smaller down to pin head size and you are getting sleepy, very sleepy, very sleeeee.. ugh!

APOCRYPHA Well I thought your contribution to the mailing was just wonderful, so there too. Perhaps you were justified, but I sit up straight and snarl at your implication that a woman applying for a job should right now automatically tell you she's married. If she's like me, she doesn't consider that particularly anyone's business....like what kind of toothpaste she uses or something. I usually put myself down as Juanita Coulson unless I'm signing for something registered to Robert Coulson and think I should stick the Mrs. part in for legality's sake. I'm not ashamed of being married, I just don't think of it as something I should parade around like a sandwich board.

Your fanzine was delightful reading. There, see, Elinor, there are some things I call delightful.

THE NEHWON REVIEW - Well, I disagreed with nearly everything Boggs said, but female-wise the only thing that moves me to comment is your ridiculous equating of Trixie and Peanuts. (Why is it childless types are the ones who come out making profound statements on comic chillun?) Peanuts is an adult child who never existed. Trixie is a baby struggling to be, and is obviously depicted by someone who has been around an infant and used eyes, ears, and empathy. Since I can remember some of my emotional reactions from pre-age three, I assure you, the author is not imagining. I agree, it is cute.

MOONSHINE In your FAPAtown, I'd rather be down as operating the local canning factory or....hey, Tucker, I'll sing filksongs in that saloon yer operating, along with librarian Pelz and w-lister Gerber etc.

LARK Oh it was you who cuts illustrations on Tower stencils. You have my sympathy, but after a few hair-tearing experiences, I have no desire to emulate you.

SALUD Well, Elinor, I don't consider Byron a minor poet, and Shelley and Keats make me want to frow up, so there's no accounting for some people's taste, or something. Other comparisons - my favorite poets: Sandburg, Poe, Teasdale, and Keller.

Hmm, something you said, Elinor, about "Flowers for Algernon", reminded me of Rick's question about personal hell. Mine has long been summed up in "Death Be Not Proud", but Keyes' tale went it one more horrible. Simply, it would be to know that one was losing the power to think, and to be helpless to prevent it - the boy from the brain tumor and Charlie from regression. If you didn't have it, it wouldn't be so horrible, or to be suddenly and mercifully robbed. But to know one has the ability to reason, and to be aware that it is fading..brr. To me the most poignant line in all the recent stf (last five years) I've read is the plaintive "Oh God please don't take it all away".

Back to Elinor - poo on the doctor who wouldn't prescribe Enovid for your friend Dulcie. One woman's taken the things for five years with no ill effects, and quite apart from making women sterile, they are used in fertility clinics to increase chances of pregnancy.

SERCON'S BANE - 'Rosenburg, Fuchs, and Blake cases' - So? Were they uncovered by HUAC? Please elucidate.

As regards the St Clair emotional crippling theory, well, I had plenty of tlc as an infant, but I've been informed I would not have been here without plenty of medical interference. Would you believe it, I was once a weakling?

VANDY \* Hoog, a red faced goof - I meant to say Masters of Education, not Arts. I have credits in German and high school credits in French and Spanish, but unfortunately they do not count on my degree. Apologies.

IDLE HANDS - Everyone to his taste - I like the Tri-State tollway, even when some nut misses his turnoff and stops dead in his lane with me and umpty others behind sheering off into the next lane at a nerve shattering 65...og.

SPECIAL MENTION TO Stefantasy, Calif, and Vinegar Worm, but I'm tired.

NOTES ON SINGING: This is not to be construed as a mailing comment, even though the touch-off items to this blather came from Mez, and Donaho, and several other people who commented on singing in general, tightening and untightening the vocal chords and like that. A lot of this was inspired outgrowthings of a response to Marion's comments to me in her last CATCH TRAP, but I expect to go far beyond a specific reply.

In other words, readers of this may find they discover more about my particular attitudes and opinions on singing than they care to know.

Singing is a peculiar quirk of human vocal ability. One occasionally hears of some operatic star or other who "didn't sing until discovered" by somebody or other; I suspect what is meant is that the star did not sing professionally, did not think of using the voice in an audience situation for pay. The FAPAns out there who sing - can you remember learning to sing? I mean, can you recall deciding one day that you were going to sing, sitting down with a do-it-yourself book and starting, much as one would tackle a musical instrument? I doubt it greatly. You may have decided you were 'going to get organized', but it's almost certain that you had learned the 'basics' in the same way you learned to speak - unconsciously and involuntarily. The rare prodigy is forced to sit in front of a doting papa and practise rote singing at age one, but the average tune-carrying mortal just 'picks it up', without realizing he is singing.

Usually.

This is by no means saying that everybody can sing. I grew up in a fairly musical household; both my parents could carry a tune, liked music, my mother played the piano and we tried a number of times. I was in my teens before I realized that some people couldn't sing (the tone-deaf boy in my choral group)...frankly, I suspected they just didn't want to sing. I thought everybody could sing.

Until I met Buck. He too grew up in a musical household, is quite fond of music, and can tell when a singer is flat. But he cannot reproduce tones accurately....not even to the extent of going up and down in the appropriate places. With a musical instrument, one can begin learning quite late in life; with the voice, I suspect it's too late. I imagine a good vocal teacher could take the tone-deaf person, brain and train and train and eventually teach him to run a scale or carry a tune, but importantly - there would very likely be no joy in it.

Singing should be fun. This is one of the major reasons why I have carefully shied away from vocal lessons all my life. I studied piano, haphazardly, seven or eight years, and almost two years ago I took up the guitar with great enthusiasm. In neither category am I remotely professional, or even very proficient. But I enjoy both of these instruments, enjoy 'fooling around' musically, and I enjoy singing.

Casual observation of other singers like myself, the moderately capable type who's never going to be professional, paints a picture of the soul of my caliber who goes in for 'training'. They must hold their hands so, and breathe so, and enunciate so, and in general spend so much time on technique that the pleasure is lost. It need not be this way, surely - but it usually is.

As a matter of fact the good professional singer, the highly trained fine voices that are a joy to listen to, are nerve wracking for me to watch. The vast majority of them are polished, disguise the technique part very well; but I am almost constantly aware of breathing, round tones, dropped jaws, clasped hands.

It looks like an awful amount of work.

And it doesn't look a bit fun.

Dyer-Bennet is one of my favorite folk-type singers, and I've seen him in person. He has a beautifully trained tenor and a great deal of stage presence - but I was aware of certain 'businesses' - not so many, surely, as watching Jan Peerce or Roberta Peters etc., but still there.

When I was in high school, I once accompanied a girl friend to her singing lesson. She reminded me of you, Marion - in what she described as a pretty-little-mousesqueaking voice - pretty, light, high, very pleasant listening, properly modulated in all the right places and so forth. I had never watched a singing lesson before and I was quite fascinated in the runs and breathing exercises and fancy stuff. My mother knew I was going to attend and asked if I might inquire about the possibility of lessons for myself. Qualmily, I inquired when Elaine had finished her time. The stereotyped little grey headed professor eyed my prize fighter's diaphragm and plunked some notes, asking me to run through them.

That was the first time I comprehended - "break". I had been singing around and over the thing since age nine, but I thought it was a defect in my voice. I must have been fourteen or fifteen at this particular time, and my lower range was down to A or G. I ran through three or four scales and the man regarded me with a jaundiced eye, told me to work on my "break", and that was that.

I later learned that it was the same problem as typing. I thought of taking typing in high school, but the typing teacher watched me do 70 words a minute, two finger, on a blank keyboard, told me it would take three years to break me of bad habits, and threw up her hands in disgust

Apparently it is the same with my singing. My bad habits were so firmly ingrained that it would take several years just to eliminate them in order to start clean with good habits. It seems too much trouble. I am never going to be an opera or concert singer and I get a great deal of pleasure now, so why bother?

Actually, I obeyed the good professor's instructions as well as I could. I did not know what 'working on my break' involved, so I assumed it meant trying to sing across it, making the transition smooth. I carefully pitched my songs (when I was feeling ambitious as well as singy) to land across my break, trying to sneak up on it from below, pushing it down from the top - and probably breaking every rule in the singing teacher's book in the process.

I'm ashamed to admit I don't even know - pitchwise - where my break falls. I could sit down at a piano and work it out, but I'm lazy. My lower range varies. Whoever was talking about lowering and raising pitch by tightening the vocal chords - I have a dandy method for lowering pitch - catch cold; I can really get down into the feminine cellar when I'm just coming out of bad cold. Gradually, with increasing health, it climbs back to my fairly normal E or F.

Now here in CATCH TRAP Marion advises me not to strain or force my voice reaching for low notes. I'm also ashamed to confess I'm not too sure what "straining" or "forcing" involves. She refers to "roughening the voice artificially". Again, I can only guess this refers to what I think of as "razzing", a favorite technique with blues and jazz singers. Uncouth me, I think of it merely as a method of getting a fair amount of saliva trapped near one's soft palate, then bellowing sufficient to vibrate the stuff.....it is not particularly a strain, but it is sort of fun. The challenge it seems is to control it adequately. I sit in awe listening to Yma Sumac do this up the scale and through her break - because I have to lower my head when I go over my break and

then I involuntarily swallow and my razz disappears and I'm back to straight singing. How does she do it?

As for "forcing" or "straining"....I don't know. I'm throwing a question out to you capable types sitting out there. Forcing or straining for a note, to me, conjures up reaching for something you're not sure you can reach. I rarely encounter this on my low tones, but I encounter it almost constantly above my break. Is this what's meant? Occasionally I sing a note and I'm in suspense wondering if I'll be able to hold or sustain it.....I know I can hit it, I just don't know if I'm going to do anything beyond that. On low notes, this only follows on the very lowest tone. Sometimes when my adenoids are working overtime, I will reach an E with ease and discover I've got something left lower and I will fiddle around and try for a D, but I'm not sure I can hold it once I get there. I try not to do this sort of experimenting when anyone's listening....but occasionally when I've been party singing for hours everything will start to go at once and I get hoarse - I hit it all right and fade away to a croak. Time to quit and oil my non-existent tonsils with a cola drink, I figure.

Yes, cola drink. This is another thing I don't understand about training. There is the old joke about the opera singer who drank whiskey to "relax" the throat and then a slug of vodka to remove the taste of the whiskey. I don't understand what "relaxing" the throat means. Singing, controlled singing - by which I mean something besides just humming along sloppily,- involves muscles for me. Particularly on high tones. If I relax, the note simply disappears and wobbles all over the place.

This, presumably, is where training comes in.

Now high notes I do have to reach for. Marion speaks of "taking up the challenge of a high voice" - and "restraining for reaching for low notes". Isn't it possible to do both at once? At the moment, my very high notes are distinctly painful. To me. Physically. I can use my high tone, and try to every day, but I can't hold it for more than a few seconds, in spite of a vast lung supply. It hurts my throat. But I'm working on it, honest. But in the meantime I have no intention of abandoning those "comfortable" low tones and letting them atrophy or something.

I'm not a contralto - not because I lack the volume or pith down there, but because I lack a certain timbre or quality that goes with contralto-ness. I can hear the lack myself, sadly.

On the other hand, I think my high range is shaky. Only solution is to work on all of it equally.

And another thing. For a long time I'd heard the myth-superstition or whatever that opera singers had to be big hefty critters in order to sing that way. There were cracks from both sides...."They don't need to be such hippos -they just like the pasta"....or - "If



an opera singer loses weight, he or she loses the voice". I have heard Maria Callas cited as an example of both arguments.

The usual pro argument is that it takes a lot of beef to put out that kind of singing. The con argument that it's just fat they're losing, and loss of fat shouldn't affect the diaphragm or lungs.

I offer another point. Entire body metabolism. To elaborate, I recently...well, six or eight months back,...went on thyroid to take off some poundage....I am not vain and I'll never be a sylph, but all that lard was making me tired, and there is a diabetic history in my family so I have to watch it.....

At any rate, I found that with the weight loss, even after the thyroid was dispensed with, I had in effect altered my metabolism. The hefty critter, even when seeming to be a bustling hausfrau type, is metaboling at a slower rate...calories are burned more slowly, circulation is slow - AND OXYGEN CONSUMPTION IS SLOW. Now I'm sure you've all seen the chubby after climbing a stairs, panting and heaving. But you put that same chubby in a stage setting and he quits panting and bellows with the greatest of ease.

But as you take off weight, everything starts speeding up, including oxygen consumption. I - and this is the most peculiar part of all - no longer pant going upstairs.....but I have much more trouble sustaining a note in singing than I did whilst thirty pounds heavier.

Mind, I can still hold the note - but I have to think about it. I have less reserve.

Could this explain the opera singer syndrome, who must have a good pair of lungs as well as all that fancy voice training? It's hard to concentrate on beauty of tone when one is wondering desperately how much longer one's going to be able to hold it without goggling for a gulp of air and good heavens the tenor isn't even approaching the end of that run, yet!

Who told you I didn't like opera, Marion. Sing "In questa reggia"? I can't even pronounce it. But I like to bellow along with recordings.

Wish someone would write a fannish operetta. Nothing very elaborate or pretentious....use short, well known stuff, one acty. Say the overture from Semiramide....easy enough so people could learn it at a convention. Wouldn't have to be a big fancy thing, but it could be an awful lot of fun.

"The only real fun to be had out of singing is in learning to sing. The development of the motor muscles of the vocal cords and the consequent production of resonant tones give the student a sort of horticultural satisfaction."

George Sanders, MEMOIRS OF A PROFESSIONAL CAD, p.53.

And I say "Bah!"



## DEPARTMENT OF FRONTAL LOBE PATTING or ARE FANS SLANS? or WHY - Q?

"Everything that exists, exists in some quantity, and that quantity can be measured". Good old Thorndike. Like the rest of the early psychological testers, he had some good ideas - control testing, how does man learn, how does intelligence develop, what is intelligence - the rest of puzzlement that had fascinated the field of education since the birth of the scientific movement.

Faculty psychology used to be all the rage - you simply exercised the proper section of the brain and you grew mentally strong.

Then that went out....or did it?

The testing and rating of intelligence is an educational Frankenstein monster, even to the people in the field. Back in the mid and late 1800s a batch of fellows, originally interested in retarded children and their humane treatment, started the ball rolling. Galton and Wundt and Cattell were quite sincere, struggling toward a nicely scientific ideal of measurements ( is it significant that the testing movement received its biggest boosts from Germany and the U.S.?). Wundt tried to eliminate individual differences in controlled testing, and his pupil Cattell decided this was a mistake and made a nice fat Phd out of the question of individual differences.

Then along came a man named Binet (correction on the earlier speculation - but Americans organized him) and we really started the ratrace.

All of the workers in the field of intelligence and testing have stressed over and over and over ad nauseam that this is a tool - reliability and validity of the tests have never been challenged so severely as by people right in the field. But like many another specialized instrument, the movement that began as a means of isolating and helping the retarded child was taken up as a status symbol.

Intelligence has been defined any number of ways. Binet thought it was adaptability and "the ability to make sound judgments". Terman, Binet's great reviser, thought it "the ability to think in abstract terms." Wechsler, the student of capability limits, considered intelligence to be "the aggregate or global capacity of the individual to act purposefully, to think rationally, and to deal effectively with his environment."

Undoubtedly all the definitions are right in certain ways. The problem is, as Wechsler has bluntly stated, that we are trying to measure something without being too terribly sure what it is we are measuring. Definitions aside, intelligence can be terribly relative.

The IQ test, designed as a teaching tool, has been most frequently misused by the very people it was designed to help, the pupils and the teachers. Teachers tended to think IQ was something resident in the child, not dependent on the test, to paraphrase Goodenough, and if the child happened to score "wrongly" according to the teacher's preconceived notions, it was not uncommon to find the teachers concocting excuses. And then the worst offense of all, if became fashionable for Johnny or Susie and their parents to be informed of the IQ rating. "Your child has an MA of 10 for a CA of 8.5 so he should be doing better work than this."

This is pretty horrible, but it happened, and still does, because

the large inherently useful monster has been turned over to statistical incompetents and is running amok in the general population (which unfortunately includes teachers).

A few items for consideration here: 1) the average mid-point of mental growth is reached just before the third birthday; 2) the standard test is scaled for a chronological age limit of 14 to 16 years on the average and adult scores must be specially scaled despite the lacking of adequate test background; 3) the highest correlations between item score and total scores are those for vocabulary(Greene); and 4)"there is a strong positive correlation between amount of schooling and intellectual ability ( as measured by the usual types of tests employed )" (Wechsler).

The tests are undoubtedly useful if used properly, but it must always be remembered that they are arbitrary tools, highly variable, and what is generally being measured is semantic ability. Terman, the reviser of Binet's original test, coined the IQ terminology to popular usage, and somehow in the shuffle his additional remarks that the tests were not to be accepted as accomplished fact got lost.

They are arbitrary. I've worked with some testing, and I've watched clinical testers almost come to blows over a statistical difference of less than one tenth of one percent on some child's test. But I offer a more personal example. At age 9 I took an IQ test. One of the items was the definition of the word 'vertebrae', which I had not at that time encountered; however I guessed it correctly, and a number of other correct guesses and calculated assumptions resulted in my skipping a grade. When I was 7 our teacher pinned to the bulletin board a photo of an alert German shepherd, informed us the dog was 'intelligent' appearing, and asked us what we thought the word meant; always quick with a hand in the air, I speculated quite rationally from my childish point of view that the word meant 'smart' because it had the word 'tell' within it.

To my way of thinking, the latter type of reasoning is more important than the former - but the rational classroom intelligence is not accepted by school boards and later employers. Hence the testing movement.

Testing is useful if properly used. I am not at all impressed when a fan comes out saying 'I have an IQ of 175' or whatever. What tests were used? How was the test administered? And most importantly, how does the person's life reflect the test score, or vice versa? It's possible to be bright and insane, certainly, or to be bright - i.e. - high scoring on a vocabulary based IQ test - and be totally ineffective as a human being. I've scored 90 on something similar to the IOWA Mathematics placement, and 140 on Binet type vocabulary tests at age sixteen; I was part of a psych class (a high school psych class, incidentally) where we were informed of the hazards of IQ tests and given so many our heads swam so we could get adequate comparisons and very practical experience in the variability of validity. It was an eye-opening business for everyone in class, especially the bright little snot-noses like myself who knew we were superior.....it was a disheartening shock to discover that to adequately prove our superiority to ourselves, now, we were going to have to do something besides wave our IQ scores around.

My vocabulary is larger now, and my mathematical ability even more nil, so the spread would be greater, and probably more invalid. I know less number theory, but I'm much more adept at the practical handling of

numbers, as in estimating the amount of groceries I'm going to be able to buy with a five dollar bill. And while my vocabulary is undoubtedly greater, I strongly suspect my adaptability quotient is much lower than it was at sixteen; the adolescent can take shifts of environment much more easily than the settled adult - perhaps it is innocence, but perhaps it is also a peak of the intelligence of adaptability which he begins to lose with age.

On the whole, I think fans are more intelligent than average, and I do not mean merely more knowledgeable, better read, and better informed. I mean more intelligent. I cite as evidence the fact that many fans have no trouble living double lives when necessary, making a mundane living, indulging in harmless (but so mundanely important) chitchat, seeming to be social when employment or just necessity demands; the fan is able to live on another level in private, to ponder the universe as it were (and make no mistake, I think many of us actually do a lot of thinking along the where are we going why are we here basis without ever saying a great deal - I suspect it embarrasses us), to read and consider and exist intellectually in a world most mundania would find horrifying. Yes, horrifying. I've recounted fandom, lightly and easy conversationally to mundane fans (particularly bad subjects, admittedly) and they were horrified at...the gut spilling to people you "didn't even know" (do they really know their next door neighbors), the taking of long dull trips to see other people (they are dull trips because mundania has no interest in the passing land, but only the destination, and not much there), and most of all, of the waste of time.

Actually, I gather the distinct impression that the average mundane, not the distinctively superior types who simply don't dig fandom, but the average joes, would find it almost impossible to adapt to this way of life, of thinking.

And there are some fans who would have difficulty adapting the other way if necessity arose, needless to say.

Faculty psychology still haunts the monster of the IQ test. Even a complete battery of tests will not give the true picture of intelligence. Is intelligence, after all, the ability to score highly on a vocabulary type exam? Is it the ability to make money - as Breen reminded me of Lancy's old theorem 'if you're so smart, why ain't you rich'? Is it the ability to adapt to any environment, to survive adequately, say, in post atomic America?

Frankly, I don't know.

May I quote Wechsler, the developer of tests for adult intelligence: "There are no absolute measures of ability (and there is no good reason to believe there ever will be any)...because no arbitrary standards can be set up that will have the same validity under all conditions."

There we have it. We're slans, but we can't really prove it.

But may I add a bit of thought from the field of psychology, and possibly anthropology as well - the flaunter of symbols, the braggart, is inevitably expressing his weakness in some way. He may well be bright, but the fact that he must tell you the fact, and cite statistics, automatically renders his superiority suspect, points a flaw.

And to drag in a personal opinion, I for one find frontal lobe patting via IQ test scores on the part of fans as comparable to golf duffers arguing handicaps while the real professional is polishing off a beautiful drive and not even bothering to note it down. He doesn't need to wave it in someone's face to prove he's capable in his endeavor.

Fin